

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 7 and 9 to 15 are pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 9 are independent.¹ Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The claims were rejected the claims for substantially the same reasons as in the prior Office Action. Specifically, claims 1 to 4, 6, 7, 9 to 12, 14 and 15 were rejected over U.S. Patent No. 5,844,437 (Asazawa et al.); and claims 5, 8, 13 and 16 were rejected over Asazawa, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,559,693 (Tung et al.). Our prior arguments were rejected on the grounds that the amended claim language does not require "direct connection".²

Accordingly, we have amended independent claims 1 and 9 to recite that the claimed switches are directly connected to the supply potential terminals and directly connected to their respective shared emitter nodes. During a telephone interview held on October 20, 2008 (for which an interview summary was filed on October 21, 2008), the Examiner confirmed that, if the claims were amended to recite a direct connection of the switches and the emitter nodes, then the claims would define over the applied art. The Examiner, however, indicated that a further search would be required. Since the claims have now been amended to recite the required direct connections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to remove the outstanding rejection and, if necessary, to perform additional searching. If no new art is uncovered as a result of that searching, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow the application.

The undersigned attorney can be reached at the address shown below. All telephone calls should be directed to the undersigned at 617-521-7896.

¹ The Examiner is urged to independently confirm this recitation of the pending claims.

² Office Action, page 9

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Please apply any fees or credits due in this case, which have not already been covered by check, to Deposit Account 06-1050 referencing Attorney Docket No. 14603-016US1.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: December 17, 2008



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